DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 138 486 SO 009 674

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TITLE Nationalistic Education in a Global Society.
PUB DATE Nov 75
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies (Atlanta, Georgia, November 24-29, 1975); Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Changing Attitudes; *Civics; *Educational History; *Educational Philosophy; Educational Trends; Elementary Secondary Education; *Global Approach; Higher Education; Moral Development; *Nationalism; Political Attitudes; School Role; Skill Development; Socialization; *Social Studies; Social Values; Values

ABSTRACT

The appropriateness of nationalistic education in the modern global society is questioned since nation-states may be superceded by supra-national or global structures. Schools provide a place for society to prepare younger generations to cherish and protect the interests of that society. Human history reflects this trend as it moves from parental training in basic survival skills to more formal and complex schooling. An historical sketch of the movement to unify a diverse group of immigrants through instruction in the English language and courses in American history provides information on the pre-20th century. Stress is on moral behavior and on the movement by organizations such as the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Sons of Veterans USA, and the American Legion to cause laws requiring patriotic exercises in the schools to be enacted. Examples of contemporary views of world citizenship are given, including one that compares international patriotism with an athletic competition in which rival loyalties may exist, but which permit their subordination to larger goals and common interests. The conclusion is that American schools must work towards a form of nationalistic education which fosters knowledge of global affairs without false natural bias, skill development in critical thinking about global issues, and creation of a sense of global community. (Author/DB)

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NATIONALISTIC EDUCATION IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY

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Presented at the National Council for the Social Studies Conference, Atlanta, Georgia, November, 1975.

This paper was prepared during a research leave provided by Rutgers University. The author also wishes to acknowledge assistance provided at the University of California, Berkeley, and by the Institute for World Order.

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The schools of a society serve the interests of that society. Though there is a lack of written documentation, one can imagine cave dwellers forming social groups for survival. Hunting, fishing, fire tending, weapon making, cooking, berry-picking and similar skills were necessary for tribal continuation. These skills were not, of course, taught in schools as we know them, but were taught, nevertheless, by elders to youngsters in the interests of the society.

By the time larger agrarian societies had developed, the accumulated skill, knowledge and beliefs needed for social survival had expanded considerably. More complex tools and weapons needed mastery. Plant and domestic animal cultivation permitted groups to cease being nomadic, and required different kinds of talents and knowledge than did hunting and fishing. Explanations of natural phenomena, stories of the past, and myths became part of the cultural heritage and the cement for societies. Language became the mechanism for transmittal of information, values and ideas. School---the more formal operation of education which came to replace families in transferring much of the socially useful information---provided a relatively systematic place for the society to prepare younger generations to cherish and protect the interests of the society. Although the setting was different, the principle was the same---education in the social interest.

The dominating characteristic of society---and the school---was religion.

Beliefs in the supernatural explanations of the natural determined who had power, who lived and who died, and how one lived. A set of beliefs by which one could comprehend birth, disease, death, flood, earthquake, planting and harvesting times, darkness and light, and the variety of events which made up the social environment was essential to the continued cohesiveness of that society. Learning the rituals, ceremonies and symbols of those beliefs was essential education.

As the complexity of social life inexorably increased, religious beliefs continued as one major portion of social and educational activity, but other areas developed in importance. Expanded trade, war, new means for communication, more specialized occupations and similar developments created new social structures and different educational needs. Guilds provided apprenticeships, merchants learned and taught, military information became more precise, and printing opened new avenues. Societies formed into nation-states incorporating beliefs about political as well as religious life. Nation-states were thought to be divinely ordained and suited for domination of others. National interest came to prominence in political discourse. Schools emerged as a means for transmitting the national beliefs.

This excessively brief and simplistic human history moves us from parental training in basic survival skills to elaborate formal schooling in many subjects considered to be valuable to the nation. Although the treatment of human history was short, it included several important elements worthy of consideration as one contemplates the present and future in education. Survival skills are still taught, but the definitions of survival have changed from individual

basic needs to national values. Religion, too, has changed and, although formal religious indoctrination is no longer taught in public schools, strong national beliefs of a religious intensity are expected from those schools. Many of the formal religious beliefs previously taught formed the basis of morality and character building lessons in the public schools of a later period. The Puritan Ethic, incorporating moderation, hard work, frugality, patience and similar moral behaviors, remains a school-taught orientation to life. McGuffey's readers may no longer be primary teaching material, though some groups are now advocating a return to them, but the same precepts are expressed in the organization, orientation and regulations of schools. Tardiness, slovenliness and bad manners are frowned upon while the school expects students to obey elders, respect authority and work hard. The reward and punishment system of the school is based on this.

At the dawning of the twentieth century, more than a hundred years after the American Revolution, a strong movement developed which had great impact on the schools. American schools had long been seen by the society as proper places to stress values. Religion, as a dominating value in society, was emphasized in the colonial schools. Despite the First Amendment separation of church and state, religion continued to have emphasis in the public schools throughout the nineteenth century, though the stress was on moral behavior. Schools were also seen as agencies for transmitting national values and for unifying a diverse group of immigrants through instruction in English language and courses in American history.

Though there were strong national feelings during the nineteenth century, there was virtually no legislation requiring schools to engage in nationalistic education.

A number of organizations, however, developed by the end of the century pressured to have such instruction a major part of the required school program. The Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, Sons of Veterans USA, Colonial Dames of America, Sons of the Revolution, and the Association of Spanish American War Veterans were credited with causing the enactment of laws requiring patriotic exercises and instruction in schools after 1890. [1]

George Balch, a West Point graduate who had risen to the rank of colonel and later became auditor of the Board of Education of New York City, wrote a book describing how patriotic exercises should be held in schools, how medallions of patriotism should be given to teachers and students, and how to get the "sentiment of patriotism" to permeate the whole school. Balch recommends that such patriotic education not be required by legislation, but that permissive laws be passed which allow and encourage these exercises in schools. His argument is that voluntary patriotism is more suitable than involuntary. The means for securing voluntary patriotism, as Balch describes it, is to have the school obtain a flag; conduct ceremonies to show the honor associated with it; notify the students that an election will take place in a month to democratically decide on the question, "Shall this school display a signal flag?", but that a unanimous vote will be necessary to show the school's loyalty; to provide that if the vote is not unanimous, another election is to be held a month later to "enable the more loyal Americans to persuade and convince their opponents." This is the form of "voluntary" patriotism to inspire school students in American ideals that Balch recommends. [2]

The American Legion founded in 1919, and other patriotic groups which have arisen since, have strongly advocated nationalistic education which emphasized American patriotism and opposed communism and other ideas considered anti-American. The Legion promoted a comprehensive program that included the following recommendations: 1) laws requiring 10 minutes each school day of patriotic exercises 2) laws requiring instruction in all elementary schools to be in "the American language" 3) American history and government be required for high school graduation 4) Legion posts cooperate with school authorities "to instill the ideals of patriotism in the hearts of future generations" 5) English be the only medium of instruction in all schools 6) American history be taught in such a way that the child will develop "adequate respect and love for his country" 7) one period per week be set aside for patriotic exercises 8) physical education and health be taught to all students at all levels 9) a national essay contest be established on partiotic subjects 10) observation of patriotic holidays occur in school programs 11) special instruction be given in the U. S. Constitution 12) more patriotic American history texts be written and used in schools. [3]

Many of the laws recommended by the Legion were passed and nationalistic education which stressed patriotic rituals and symbols in addition to anti-communist (radical, socialist, etc.) instruction became a standard feature of school life. American history and physical education are required courses in most states, patriotic exercises and holidays are featured in school programs, and the Legion did produce a history textbook which included the following definitions of conservatism and liberalism:

> Conservatism wants to progress cautiously. It sees clearly the good in present things and knows the dangers of change. Liberalism looks rather to the evils of the present and is willing to risk dangers in the hope of improvement. . . . The earnest conservative finds himself supported by the laziness and greed of many who are specially favored by present conditions. The liberal who urges any radical change draws to his side the blind destroyers of every sort, the reckless adventurers who hope to snatch from the ruins some robber prize, and the foolish folk who do not know how hideously the common man suffered in the past and so assume that their present possessions, liberty and protection, would be but little things to lose.[4]

The spirit of free inquiry into national values has not been a strong point in nationalistic education here or elsewhere.[5] Such social education, mainly through national history and civics, can properly be called an ethnoscience in the sense that knowledge (science) is limited by the political framework within which it operates. This ethnoscientific view of social education creates several questions in a world environment.

There is no doubt that we live in a global society. Political boundaries still exist as separations among nation-states, but increasing recognition of the interdependence of peoples in common problems such as pollution, trade, energy and food has altered public perceptions of the role of nations in international affairs. Multi-national corporations expand in number and relationship. Their interests necessitate negotiations and communications beyond political diplomacy or war. Travel systems are virtually global with sizable numbers of middle class travelers moving about relatively freely. International money exchange has become a major force in national political decision-making. Pollution created in one part of the planet influences another.

Many significant writers have treated the global situation in

regard to politics, energy, food, population, economics, war and other similarly comprehensive matters.[6] While there is no agreement on the specific organization or operation of a global system, there is agreement that such a system is likely to evolve. Just as nation-states were not in existence at one time in human history, one can postulate that national systems of government will diminish and expire in favor of supra-national, regional and/or global structures. Some argue that the European Common Market is one example of that movement.

In a global society, narrow nationalistic education appears to be dysfunctional. Nationalistic education is intended to produce national loyalty and often has two forms: efforts to instill strong positive beliefs in national values and efforts to instill strong negative beliefs about those ideas, symbols, events and people considered to be contra-national.

To the extent that nationalistic education is successful in both forms, pride of state will frustrate the sense of global identity. Joseph Morray, a law professor inspired by the excesses of the McCarthy period, wrote on patriotism describing several characteristics of it as follows:

> ". . .Patriotism binds a people and divides peoples. There is solidarity on the inside and hostility toward the outside. . .
>
> . . .We measure patriotism by sacrifice and effort. . . Patriotism wears a habit of violence, and one of our problems is to determine whether this is an accidental dress. . .
> Patriotism pursues earthly power. It delights in the strength of its state and measures this by material wealth, armies, independence and dominion.
>
> . . .Evidently patriotism is an alloy of love, hate and duty."[7]

Morray completes his study of the psychology and ethics of

patriotism by stating the bi-polarity of the phenomenon. The virtue of patriotism lies in its drawing people together in a common bond of fellowship and service. Its evil rests upon the collective hatred which Morray calls a "barbarism." He advocates world patriotism as an appropriate way to utilize the positive qualities of patriotism and to diminish the negative. His 1959 volume notes a movement toward world government as a response to the "crisis of patriotism" which he describes as the struggle between patriotism and conscience in which patriotism involves denunciation of other nationalities while conscience argues for loyalties to principles beyond the nation-state. Morray, after consideration of the moral backgrounds to patriotism, suggests that the "morality of patriotism leads by a logical movement up a ladder of duties until it includes the whole human race within the circle of its good will. . . . It is only the 'wise and virtuous' who are capable of a world patriotism."[8]

This same view was expressed in a 1917 book by Sir Charles Waldstein which elaborated ideas presented in 1898 as a lecture in which he advocated establishment of an Anti-Chauvinistic League.[9] In Waldstein's book is presented a case for an ascending scale of corporate duties based on moral relationships among the individual, the group, the state, civilization and humanity. He developed this concept more fully in Aristodemocracy, but uses the idea in the 1917 book to support his proposal for international patriotism. This view of the moral basis for patriotism is the root of the view that narrow national chauvinism is dysfunctional to what Waldstein calls "true patriotism", that loyalty to the ideals of human life. He is strongly committed to education as a means for developing this moral idea that incorporates national interest to the extent that national

interest coincides with the ideals of humanity. As Waldstein puts it, "The final aim of all education is to make ideals realities, the moving force to thought and action."[10] Instruction in civics and ethics is basic, according to Waldstein, but not the civics which emphasizes negative characteristics of other governments or ideologies.

A similar strand of thought carries through Clarence Reidenbach's philosophic study of patriotism done as a dissertation for a Ph.D. at Yale in 1918.[11] Reidenbach examines the characteristics of patriotism and subjects it to scrutiny as an ethical system. He determines a bipolarity also in the concept as it is applied, though he apparently did not have access to Waldstein's book. Reidenbach notes that patriotism is noble in its ability to inspire human idealism, cooperation and unselfishness, but that it also can be divisive, conflict-producing and obstructive. He, too, concludes with the idea that:

> "The fact of the business is that patriotism is a stage in the growth of loyalty. States and nations are steps in the process of world integration. After families, tribes, city-states and all the rest have come nations. Nations must have the loyalty of mankind because they are the largest peace units so far attained, and because they will be the foundation of larger peace units. The next step in the organization of the race seems to be that of internationalism."[12]

Edwin C. Reischauer, noted scholar on Asia and former U. S. Ambassador to Japan, presents a more contemporary view of the idea of world citizenship and the need for educational change to accomodate it. Reischauer states that world citizenship does not require world government, and he sees value in national pride providing such pride does not require hate of foreign groups. He uses the metaphor of athletic competition in which

rival loyalties may exist, but which permit their subordination to larger goals and "a broader unit of overarching common interests, though without losing its own identity in the process." He continues, "That is what is required once more, but on a global scale." A large section of Reischauer's book is devoted to education for a world community. He indicates that there is a great burden on education to provide the skills and knowledge needed in a global setting, but he stresses the importance of a "sense of world citizenship among the population as a whole."[13]

The period of the American bicentennial is a fitting time to consider the nature and ethics of patriotism as a part of nationalistic education. The interests of the American society at this time are served by global conditions of peace, economic development, environmental stability, human justice and the opportunity for free participation in political decisions. This calls for a different form of nationalistic education in American schools---one which fosters knowledge of global affairs without hate of others or false national bias; one which provides skills in critical thinking for examination of those global issues; and one which inspires a sense of global community.

Since the schools of a society serve the interests of that society, it is imperative that the public see that the interests of America are consistent with human values in a global society, and that narrow nationalistic education is not only outdated, it is an anachronism.

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